

## *Using Digital Portfolios to Develop Students' Writing: A Practical Guide for Language Teachers*

Lam, R., & Moorhouse, B., L.

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Portfolios have recently gained popularity in language education as they afford a vivid picture of one's development (Zhou et al., 2013). Moreover, globalization and technological advancements urged educators to raise their knowledge of digital portfolios, too (Walland & Shaw, 2022). Digital portfolios can display one's learning, development, identity, and practice in second/foreign language (L2) contexts (Authors, 2022). However, the utility of digital portfolios is limited to higher education, and their contribution to primary/secondary students' writing language skills has remained uncharted.

Against this backdrop, in their monograph entitled "*Using Digital Portfolios to Develop Students' Writing: A Practical Guide for Language Teachers*" Lam and Moorhouse underscored the applications of digital portfolios and the required knowledge and skills for their integration into L2 classrooms. The book enlarges the scope of research and practice of digital portfolios in relation to language skills. It equips L2 teachers, teacher educators, researchers, language specialists, and educational policymakers with necessary expertise regarding the principles, uses, and practices of digital portfolios. This monograph illuminates theory, research, and practice of digital portfolio that foster L2 teachers' and students' digital portfolio literacy improvement. It presents the steps to use and benefit from digital portfolios in L2 writing with rooms for new discoveries.

Structurally, the book includes 10 chapters under four classifications, namely "rationale, curriculum and assessment, application tools, and vignettes". In the first two chapters, the authors present the background and theoretical rationale behind the use of digital portfolios in L2 writing. In chapter 3, Lam and Moorhouse explicate how portfolios can be injected into the English writing curriculum. They present a framework with three models of portfolio-integration; parallel, blended, and separated. Then the features of each model are described besides their practicality across contexts. In chapter 4, Lam and Moorhouse explain how portfolio-based assessment can materialize in L2 contexts. They comprehensively elucidate the benefits and barriers of portfolio assessment. Additionally, classroom-based



## Using Digital Portfolios to Develop Students' Writing

A Practical Guide for Language Teachers

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digital portfolio and standardized digital portfolio as two methods for assessing L2 writing via portfolios are explained.

Next, feedback typologies in digital portfolio assessment are eloquently clarified in Chapter 5 with e-feedback being more highlighted. Then practical steps are provided to integrate e-feedback into digital portfolios in online contexts. In Chapter 6, the emerging tools and applications for digital portfolios including Blackboard, Mahara, Padlet, Learning Management Systems (LMS), Moodle, Seesaw, Schoology, Canvas, Blogger, and FreshGrade are presented. After describing their core features, the authors introduce three common types of digital portfolios, namely *blogs*, *customized portfolio applications*, and *websites*.

To turn theories into practices, the authors describe three context-specific vignettes in pre-school, primary, and secondary education in Chapters 7–9. For each setting, the authors foreground specific characteristics, experiences, practices, and emotions involved in applying digital portfolios. They present samples of digital portfolio application in L2 education to promote students' literacy development and self-regulated learning. The final chapter presents future trends in researching and practicing digital portfolios in L2 contexts. Furthermore, the benefits and challenges of employing digital portfolios in L2 classes are enumerated. Lastly, the authors offer some future directions for researchers and teachers to examine various affective, technical, and professional factors while implementing digital portfolios.

Generally, this inspirational monograph is praiseworthy and recommended for some reasons. First, it integrates several theoretical underpinnings, principles, ideas, and genuine examples to broaden L2 teachers' perspectives about the utility of digital portfolios. The second merit is the provision of several tasks and discussion questions, which augment the audiences' conceptual understanding of digital portfolios. Third, this resource is momentous for using a simple, solid, and concise writing style that brings sufficient explanations without bombarding readers with technical jargons. The fourth advantage concerns its glossary of terms at the outset of each chapter that sets the scene for readers. The book is also meritorious in providing actual classroom practices that allow readers to combine their learned knowledge and pedagogical repertoires.

Despite these benefits, this resource has some shortcomings. First, it is unfortunate that the voices of different stakeholders and instances of digital portfolios use in different cultures are not included. Bringing more geographically diverse examples might inspire L2 teachers, educators, and researchers. Second, the book could have separately added "suggestions for further reading" and "future directions" at the end of each chapter to provoke readers' enthusiasm. This edition has postponed future directions to the last chapter, while each chapter could have had separate ones considering the variety of topics, themes, and research strands covered throughout the book. Next, it would have been insightful if this monograph had brought qualitative, mixed-methods, and longitudinal studies on the uses of digital portfolios in L2 writing. Finally, the book does not make a connection among digital portfolio, assessing writing, and L2 teacher education.

Regardless of these backdrops, this book can serve as a springboard for producing a sense of maturity among L2 educators and practitioners considering the theories, principles, and practices of digital portfolio in L2 writing development. This thought-provoking book also informs L2 teachers (pre-service and in-service), educational researchers, teacher educators, postgraduate students, language experts, course designers, and language policymakers of the utilities of digital portfolios in EFL writing contexts.

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